



25 June 2013

### **Corruption Watch alarmed at State hiding behind a non-binding security policy**

Corruption Watch finds it particularly disturbing that a non-binding security policy is being used to classify the Nkandla upgrade report 'top secret' and therefore hiding its contents from the public.

Executive director, David Lewis commented: "given that this policy on classification is to be replaced by the Protection of State Information Bill, this cynical attempt to keep information of this sort secret reveals that true intentions of the Bill are to maintain secrecy over misconduct in the use of public funds rather than state security".

The lack of transparency in the Nkandla homestead upgrade and the stance of the Department of Public Works (DPW) and State Security in using secrecy provisions contained in a policy document to justify non-disclosure was unacceptable, Lewis added.

Corruption Watch calls for immediate disclosure of all aspects of the Department of Public Works (DPW) report that legitimately fall outside of security provisions that are contained in existing enforceable legislation.

This call follows several request already made for Minister of Public Works, Thulas Nxesi, to explain why the entire DPW'S report into the upgrade of President Jacob Zuma's Nkandla residence was declared classified. Corruption Watch has specifically called for disclosure of the names of the contractors engaged to perform upgrade work on Nkandla.

Lewis said the classification of the Department's report as 'Top Secret' uses Minimum Information Security Standards (MISS), a policy which in any event only allows classification of a document as 'top secret' where disclosure of the information would 'neutralise the objectives of the state'.

"How will disclosure of the contractors' names, for example, have the potential to 'neutralise the objectives of the state? Hiding this information is totally unacceptable and we will continue to challenge this decision," added Lewis.

For further information:

David Lewis 082 567 3748